

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BLOGGERS ROUNDTABLE WITH CAPTAIN JACK HANZLIK, SPOKESMAN,
OFFICE OF CHIEF OF NAVAL PERSONNEL SUBJECT: NAVY'S NEW NATIONAL DALE JR.
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CHARLES "JACK" HOLT (chief, New Media Operations, OASD PA): Good
afternoon, sir.

Captain Jack Hanzlik's with us, the Office of Navy Personnel. Sir, do
you have an opening statement for us, or will you just kind of get started on
the questions and answers?

CAPT. HANZLIK: I'll let you go right to questions and answers. I
didn't really have an opening statement. I thought it might just run more
interesting if we went right to Q&A.

MR. HOLT: All right, sir. Well, it's an interesting development with
the Dale Jr. Division. What was the inspiration for that? What got that
started?

CAPT. HANZLIK: Well, this past year we, in our particular office here
at Chief of Naval Personnel, we inherited the program from Navy Recruiting
Command. We felt that the overall program was broader than just recruiting. So
we brought it to the higher headquarters, where we added to it a larger focus on
media as well as morale. So the three elements that we now are trying to really
capture with this is recruiting, morale for those folks that are already
currently in the service, and media.

One of the things that we realized is that in the past, we had only
really captured data as to what sort of our return on investment was for the
program, in terms of just how many leads we were able to generate at the track,
meaning how many young men or women came by, saw our either recruiting booths at
the track or saw something on television, were interested, talked to a
recruiter, and then turned out to be a qualified candidate with interest in the
service. And that only captured a portion of what we wanted to collect.

What we really wanted to find out was, within NASCAR is there a big
enough interest by our demographic, those young men and women 18 to 25 years
old, that are what we consider the recruiting demographic, as well as
influencers, those folks that, you know, encourage young men or women to
consider the service as a viable career option, that would be attracted to the
Navy based upon, I'll say, the celebrity status of NASCAR, and in particular
Dale Earnhardt, Jr.

And so what we wanted to create was a particular advertising campaign where he talks to folks and encourages them to consider the service as a career.

And there's a fantastic advertisement that goes along with this -- and broadcast television, radio, web and print -- that is a call to service.

And what we're then trying to measure is once those advertisements are actually posted, how quickly do young men and women raise their hand to join the service? And did they in fact come and join the service, based upon their seeing that advertisement and some level of interest or connection to NASCAR?

MR. HOLT: Okay, sir. Well, that's quite interesting.

CAPT. HANZLIK: Pretty long answer. I'm sorry for that. (Laughs.)

MR. HOLT: No. That's quite all right.

CAPT. HANZLIK: I wanted to try and give you as much as I could.

MR. HOLT: Yeah. There's a lot of stuff in that. Why don't we -- Boston Maggie is on the line with us here.

So Maggie, why don't you get us started with -- what are your questions?

Q Good afternoon, Captain Hanzlik. I had a couple of questions, but actually what you were just saying had me wondering.

Who collects your data? Is that something you do internally? Do you have an outside firm that's going to pull this together and analyze it?

CAPT. HANZLIK: We do. We work with an advertising agency called Campbell-Ewald based up out of Detroit. And they handle our recruit advertising and marketing program for us. And so as part of this program, they are our contractor that provides onsite support to us, meaning that they bring with them certain recruiting activities and sites and things.

And for example, one would be, we'll have a NASCAR painted like the Navy NASCAR. And kids can come up and take their photograph beside that car. And then they would go to a website to download that photograph of them standing next to the Navy NASCAR. And when they do that, they have to input their data that gives, you know, name, contact information, their age. And then that allows us to follow back up with that young man or woman to determine what their level of interest in the service is. And that's just one example of how we collect data on them and how we gain our leads, if you will, for viable recruits.

Q Okay, thank you.

CAPT. HANZLIK: And thanks and good morning, by the way.

MR. HOLT: (Laughs.) All right.

And Maggie, what other questions do you have? You can go ahead. The list is kind of --

Q Well, I didn't want to step on anyone else.

MR. HOLT: Well, we can just kind of carry this onto the conversation. And as we have questions, we can just kind of chime in.

Q Okay.

Well, recently the CNO spoke about diversity. And I believe the quote was, when the nation looks at the Navy, it should see itself reflected back.

How are you incorporating that motive into this campaign?

CAPT. HANZLIK: Well, I think NASCAR has had the reputation of being more of a male-dominant, white-attracted or Caucasian-attracted type of sport if you will. We're finding that that demographic has changed substantially.

There's at least equally a large number of female folks who are interested in NASCAR. And so that's one element. We're heavily focused on attracting women to the Navy these days. So we do reach that demographic in that audience.

There are fewer minorities in the service, I'm sorry, in NASCAR, than you'll find in other areas, other sports for example. But it seems to be growing. And I don't have any measure to give you at what rate it's growing. But you'll see it in the drivers. We certainly see it in the teams too. I mean, the team is as diverse as they come.

And what we try to show when we bring our sailors there is that we are a diverse service, from those folks that are involved with the recruiting activities. We have both men and women and usually each of the different race and ethnic backgrounds represented there too, so that as young men and women approach us to talk to us about the service, they see that we are a diverse organization.

We also carry that one step further in that we have a program called the Fleet Honoree Program. And that's part of our morale focus, where we bring young men and women who are sailors out in the fleet, doing great work, and it's kind of a reward where we choose one of our commands to be honored at each race. And a lot of times it may tie to something unique that has happened in the real world also.

For example, down at Talladega, we brought the folks off of the USS Lake Erie. Lake Erie, if you remember, a little more than a month and a half ago, was the cruiser that shot down the spy satellite. And we thought that there might be some real interest for media to have the opportunity to interview the young kids -- I say kids, but -- the young men and women that were involved in that incredible event.

And so we try to bring down sailors that have recently done something that is noteworthy, that media might be interested in talking to them about. It's a nice reward for them to come down and experience -- that's kind of a unique thing. And then we bring them right down to the pits, and they spend the day in the garage, at the pit, with the team throughout the day, and they get a chance to meet those folks that are really running the programs for the drivers. And they get a chance to sort of share their respective experiences and see men and women like themselves that are doing different jobs.

And you know, it puts our best foot forward. And I think that everybody that's had a chance to meet the young men and women that come down and participate as a fleet honoree, they've always been very impressed with them.

Q Very good. So you're kind of hitching your wagon to the exposure that NASCAR brings --

CAPT. HANZLIK: We are.

Q -- especially in the case of Lake Erie.

CAPT. HANZLIK: Yeah, we absolutely are. And those young men and women that do come down are -- you know, we try to choose a number of them that represent different ethnic backgrounds, different socioeconomic backgrounds. We -- because it is kind of a reward also, we want to, you know, certainly reward those best sailors that are out there, and this -- last week, for example, we had the Blue Angels. We tried to do a sort of co-branding, if you will, with the Blue Angels and the NASCAR teamed up as our -- sort of our two high-performance teams in the service, if you will. And we've got, you know, every ethnic background, men and women that work in the teams with the Blue Angels and have them right alongside the NASCAR folks who, you know, is becoming more and more diverse, too. It demonstrates to them, you know, our background, and they get a chance to kind of see how similar the teamwork and sort of the high-tech elements of each of our service -- how common they really are.

MR. HOLT: All right, sir. And now we can talk a little bit about some of the specifics of the program. Now it's a -- the Dale Earnhardt Division -- now it's -- how many troops are you planning on assigning to this division?

CAPT. HANZLIK: Well, as you know, the Navy's car is number 88, and so we are looking to bring in 88 young men and women into the Dale Earnhardt Jr. Division.

MR. HOLT: Okay. How many have you got so far? This is relatively -- this is a new program.

CAPT. HANZLIK: It is. Absolutely. In fact, we haven't even kicked off the advertising for it yet. We did a press conference down at Talladega a little more than a week ago to announce that the program was actually going to kick off, and we started accepting some recruits into the program already based upon that announcement. But the real advertising elements of it -- as I mentioned, television, radio, Web and print -- were really designed to launch on Memorial Day weekend.

Thus far we've had -- I don't know what today's exact count is, but we've had about 10 or 12 folks that have already signed up for it, just based upon the press release that they saw and/or watching television. And we had a story up on our Navy website, as well as some other mainstream media that wrote on it. And that attracted a few young men and women.

MR. HOLT: Okay. And what -- when are they supposed to be beginning their boot camp, beginning their training?

CAPT. HANZLIK: They'll actually what we call class up in August. And at that point in time, Dale Earnhardt Jr. will go up and meet with them, commission the class to kick off their training. And you know, they'll wear some special ball caps and coin and logos that will be unique to the fact that

they're the Dale Earnhardt Jr. Division. And he'll get a chance to meet with them, sign some autographs, talk to them and really encourage them as they start boot camp. And then throughout their training, he'll get a chance to visit with them, and then of course for graduation too.

And sort of as part of the program as well, you know, we look at the Navy and NASCAR for some similarities. And one of the things that's really interesting that I have noticed is that there's sort of a graduation program of junior guys and gals coming in at a particular level of racing. They see an organization that's a winning organization, like JRM, JR Motorsports, Dale Earnhardt's company, and they look at that and go: Wow, if I start here, I can get trained by this guy, this gal on how to do the following things, and I can move from perhaps the Craftsman Truck Series racing into the Nationwide, then up to the Sprint Cup.

And there's opportunity there for me to grow, there's opportunity for me to progress with winning teams, to learn a lot with folks, and I can see a future with this organization. And that's one of the things that we think is a similarity within the Navy. You come in at a junior level. You develop some skills. You work under other men and women that are more senior, you get mentored along the way, and you've got a career ahead of you, an organization that you can stick with. Our driver right now, Brad Keselowski, that races for us in the Nationwide Series, will join the guys and gals while they're going through boot camp as well, because he says he's still getting mentored every now and then too.

MR. HOLT: All right. Okay.

Maggie, anything else?

Q No. I'd like to hear what other people are asking.

MR. HOLT: All right. Any other questions? (No response.) All right.

So we're looking at classing them up in August, but how long is the boot camp?

CAPT. HANZLIK: It's about eight weeks.

MR. HOLT: About eight weeks? So then they'll be back out in the fleet and ready to go here by the end of the year, then.

CAPT. HANZLIK: Yep. Absolutely. And Dale Earnhardt, Jr., will join them up there for their graduation, and we think that that will be a big deal to them. We know it's a big deal to him. He's enthusiastic about it. He's been a strong supporter of both Navy and of National Guard, as well.

Q And Jack, I just have one question. This is Lieutenant Cragg. Hello, sir.

CAPT. HANZLIK: Hey.

Q Hey. I have one question. Do you think the other services, such as the Army, will use the same tactic? I think it's -- is it Mark Martin that drives the Army car? Do you think they'll use this type of recruiting if the Navy is really successful? CAPT. HANZLIK: You know, it's a good question. We haven't talked about this particular program very much. We've worked with the

National Guard because they also sponsor Dale Earnhardt, Jr., and his company at the Sprint Cup level, and they operate with a different budget than do we and a different focus. So it wouldn't surprise me if they saw this and maybe thought that it was a good idea and decided to try it themselves.

But we're each a little bit different in terms of how we choose to market. We share our ideas openly, particularly between us and National Guard, because we realize that we're not really competing for the same candidates. National Guard is looking for folks who are interested in doing service not full-time but are willing to answer the call if asked to do so. We're looking for folks more full-time, yet we do have a Reserve option as well. And so we work really well together. We like to say that, you know, we work on the battlefield together, and when we come home, we do here, too. So we don't find it to be a competitive thing, and we share ideas, but right now our programs are a little bit different.

MR. HOLT: Right. Then you do have a -- you're not trying for the same pool of folks, for exactly that reason, being that the National Guard is looking -- people in the National Guard are typically looking for a way to serve not only their nation, but their state, and skills that can help them on their civilian jobs.

CAPT. HANZLIK: Yeah, absolutely right. And like I said, we've got a very open discussion with them. We see each other at the track every week. They race on, you know, the following day from us, but we always stop in, say hey, and share what we're working on and how things are going. And what you'll see quite often too, particularly with JR Motorsports, is crew that perhaps work on both the Nationwide Series and then also serve in the Sprint Cup, that will work on both teams on some aspect of it.

And so you'll see a guy that might wear the National Guard uniform in the Sprint Cup standing alongside a guy who is wearing the Navy uniform for the Nationwide race, and they'll be standing side by side in the pits working together, helping each other out, too. And so it's kind of a nice image there of the teamwork that we have, you know, when we go into what we do.

MR. HOLT: Right. And this is a unique marketing and recruiting opportunity and method. How is Navy doing on recruiting overall?

CAPT. HANZLIK: Overall? Great. We have continued to hit, month after month, our recruiting goals. I think we're now in month number 79, which is over six years straight of meeting our recruiting goals. And we've done that without dropping our standards. You know, we continue to maintain a high level of standards, and we've hit it consistently.

And, you know, it's an interesting thing, too. You know, when you look at the services and the people that we bring in, these are not kids who can't make it elsewhere. The average -- I'll say the percentage of men and women out there that are in the recruit eligibility range, 17 to 25 these days, only about 28 to 30 percent of those kids are eligible for service based upon academic standings, conduct and physical capabilities. And so you take that other 70 percent that we can't even really recruit from because of those elements, you're looking at, you know, a top 30 percent of our youth that are out there.

And so they're coming in physically able to do the missions that we're going to ask them to do, academically capable of working with the high-tech equipment that we're operating these days and making decisions in complex

environments in which they're operating, and good behavior, too. And I realize it's a cross-section of America, so you still have some aberrations out there with those behaviors, but by and large we're in good shape.

MR. HOLT: All right, sir. Well, thank very much.

And any other questions, anything else out here?

Q I just had one more question.

MR. HOLT: Sure. Q Sir, you kind of spoke on the teamwork between NASCAR -- the similarities, teamwork between NASCAR and Navy. You touched bases on it a little bit when you compared it. And I like the example that you showed of maybe a National Guard -- maybe a pit crewman working alongside maybe a Navy crewman. Can you just speak about the similarities between teamwork, between both, and why there's so many similarities and how it works both on the racetrack and on a flight deck of a carrier, for example.

CAPT. HANZLIK: Similarities between Navy and National Guard, or similarities between NASCAR and Navy?

Q NASCAR and Navy. Sorry about that.

CAPT. HANZLIK: Yeah, yeah. Well, I'll tell you. I am a relatively newcomer to NASCAR as a motorsport. And the thing that captured me absolutely, first and foremost, when I came to my very first race last year and had the opportunity to stand in the pits was that, first of all, you had men and women working side by side. And I was absolutely impressed to see the gal that designs and builds and tweaks the whole shock system for Brad Keselowski's number 88 car was a female. Young gal, I mean -- and could not be smarter. I mean, just knew so much about the technology that went into that and the equipment that she was using to measure those things, I was absolutely impressed.

Very similar to the type of things that I saw -- I'm a former aviator before I became a public affairs officer. The same thing I'd see in a jet engine mechanic shop onboard the courier. You could walk down there. You'd see a young gal working on, you know, a turbine system, and that was very encouraging to me. I was very impressed by that.

Then you step into high optempo where, you know, the car comes into the pit and you've got a team that's trying to change tires, clean a windshield, fuel the car, get the driver a, you know, quick drink of whatever; ask whatever, you know, things need to be tweaked, in a matter of less than 15 seconds.

And they're doing that with, you know, very, very -- they've each mastered their skills. And then they master the communication aspect of doing their work that they have to do.

And again I'm going to go back to my aviation experience. But my time on the flight deck of a carrier, I watched men and women who were, you know, very, very competent in what they did. They had to master their skills to move those aircraft around the flight deck, launch them from the flight deck.

But most importantly was, or just as important was, the communications aspects and the sequencing of that. Because if you didn't have that right,

that's when people got injured. And so the teamwork and all of that, that goes into it, it's just -- it's the same.

And so I found great similarities there in technology, skill development, competence and the communication aspects of it. It's really neat.

Q Thank you.

MR. HOLT: All right, sir. High-tech, high-performance team working: That's NASCAR and the Navy. And thank you, sir, for joining us today for the Bloggers Roundtable. Do you have any closing thoughts, closing comments for us?

CAPT. HANZLIK: Well, we're just really excited this year. And thanks for asking the questions. I really appreciate the opportunity to come talk to you.

This has been a real great year for us so far, that the team's been doing great. You know, the Navy continues to do great with our recruiting. And we think that this program will help us even further.

And what's been also exciting is that as we've sort of enhanced our program, for bringing out current sailors to the track and showing them the experience down on pit road, they've been going back and sharing their experience with their friends, you know, back afloat or ashore, wherever they're based.

And we're starting to see, you know, a greater following in our NASCAR team. You know, everybody has got a favorite baseball team or football team, whether they're really a follower or not. You know, they always want to say, yeah, that's my team. And we're really starting to see that with the Navy NASCAR too.

MR. HOLT: All right, sir. Thank you very much. Captain Jack Hanzlik with us -- the chief of Naval Personnel public affairs officer. Thanks for joining us and speaking with us today.

CAPT. HANZLIK: Great. Hey, thanks very much, everybody. Take care.

END.